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Docket No.: UPVG0005-101  
PATENTSerial Number: 10/734,024  
Filed: December 11, 2003**In the Claims:**

Please amend claims 1, 4, 16 and 21, cancel claims 19, 24 and 28, and add new claims 29-34 as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1 (Currently Amended). A method of inhibiting proliferation of cells which comprises the step steps of:

obtaining isolated Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof; and

contacting cells with an amount of said Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof effective to inhibit cell proliferation, ; or introducing into cells a nucleic acid molecule that comprises a nucleotide sequence that encodes vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof whereby said nucleotide sequence is expressed by said cells.

2 (Original). The method of claim 1 wherein said cells are differentiated.

3 (Original). The method of claim 1 wherein said cells are undifferentiated.

4 (Currently Amended). A method of preventing lymphocyte activation which comprises the step steps of:

obtaining isolated Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof; and

contacting a lymphocyte cell with an amount of said Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof effective to prevent activation, ; or introducing into cells a nucleic acid molecule that comprises a nucleotide sequence that encodes vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof whereby said nucleotide sequence is expressed by said cells.

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5 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 wherein said cells are T cells.

6-13 (Canceled).

14 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 wherein said cells are B cells.

15 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 wherein said cells are monocytes.

16 (Currently Amended). A The method of claim 1 inhibiting proliferation of cells which comprises the step steps of:

obtaining isolated Vpr protein; and

contacting cells with an amount of said Vpr protein effective to inhibit cell proliferation.

17 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 16 wherein said cells are T cells.

18 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 16 wherein said cells are B cells.

19 (Canceled).

20 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 which comprises the step of: contacting cells with a functional fragment of Vpr protein.

21 (Currently Amended). A The method of claim 4 preventing lymphocyte activation which comprises the step steps of:

obtaining isolated Vpr protein; and

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contacting lymphocyte cells with an amount of said Vpr protein effective to prevent activation.

22 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 21 wherein said lymphocyte cells are T cells.

23 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 21 wherein said lymphocyte cells are B cells.

24 (Canceled).

25 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 4 which comprises the step of: contacting lymphocyte cells with a functional fragment of Vpr protein.

26 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 25 wherein said lymphocyte cells are T cells.

27 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 25 wherein said lymphocyte cells are B cells.

28 (Canceled).

29 (New). A method of inhibiting lymphocyte activation which comprises the steps of:  
obtaining isolated Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof; and  
contacting lymphocyte cells with an amount of said Vpr protein or a functional fragment thereof effective to inhibit activation;  
wherein cytokine production and secretion by immunoglobulin activation of lymphocyte cells is inhibited.

30 (New). The method of claim 29 wherein said lymphocyte cells are T cells.

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31 (New). The method of claim 29 wherein said lymphocyte cells are B cells.

32 (New). A method of inhibiting lymphocyte activation which comprises the steps of:

obtaining isolated Vpr protein; and

contacting lymphocyte cells with an amount of said Vpr protein effective to inhibit activation;

wherein cytokine production and secretion by immunoglobulin activation of lymphocyte cells is inhibited.

33 (New). The method of claim 32 wherein said lymphocyte cells are T cells.

~~34 (New). The method of claim 32 wherein said lymphocyte cells are B cells.~~